

**SECRET**62A 1310 #4  
DOWN (R&E OPS)  
SD-BOSD review(s)  
completed.

2 Nov 55

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (DPA) #74684

SUBJECT: Report of Action Taken in Compliance with Recommendations  
Made by the Defense Advisory Committee on Prisoners of War

1. Reference is made to Secretary Wilson's 18 August 1955 letter to the Director of Central Intelligence, which stated that plans for the penetration of Prisoner of War Camps and procedures for the recovery of Prisoners of War required coordination and improvement among the interested agencies. In connection with responsibilities assigned this office, the following action has been taken to date.

2. Meetings among representatives of this office, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Central Intelligence Agency have produced the following results:

a. It has been noted by CIA that the "Command Relationships Paper" which provides for the overall military control of Central Intelligence Agency operations in a theater of war, and which did not exist at the time of Korea, will materially improve joint operations in future theaters of war.

b. Meetings with the CIA have been set up in order to define responsibilities of the agencies at interest, to review them and to make recommendations for future procedures commensurate with current capabilities.

3. With reference to Secretary Wilson's letter of 18 August 1955 to the Secretary of State which, while recognizing the past efforts of the Department of State in attempting to secure the release of U.S. civilian and military personnel held as political hostages by Communist countries, urged continuing efforts in this respect, the following actions have been taken by this office in response to its assigned responsibilities in this field:

a. Based on almost a year of experience, this office, by memorandum to the military services, broadened the terms of reference and expanded the functions of the Department of Defense Representative on the Interagency PW Committee.

b. In preparation for Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson's discussions with Chinese Communist representatives at Geneva, this office gave Ambassador Johnson an exhaustive briefing and furnished required documentation for his effort.

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e. At the request of the Department of State, this office prepared a draft statement for Ambassador Johnson's use in placing a demand on the Chinese Communists for an accounting for 150 U.S. unaccounted-for PW's from the Korean War. This statement, with comments of Defense agencies, was negotiated with the Department of State to final acceptance on 3 October 1955.

f. At the further request of the Department of State, this office prepared an interim position for Ambassador Johnson to take at Geneva, based on the assumption that the Chinese Communists would counter his demand with a demand of their own for an accounting on Communist PW's captured by the UN Command.

g. Currently undertaking a review of the Panmunjom Negotiations as they related to "mutual accounting" for captured PW's with a view to developing a final position for Johnson at Geneva. This review and final position paper will be staffed within Defense during the week of 7-11 November and then forwarded to the Department of State.

h. This office, at the direction of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and with the approval of the OCB, has retained Mr. W. L. White of the Readers Digest to perform an exhaustive research and study on all aspects of PW affairs during the Korean War and to relate them to the Geneva Conventions on Prisoners of War and the general problem of Communist non-compliance with the Conventions, as well as to Communist illegal exploitation of PW's for political purposes.

i. This office currently is studying the entire problem of intelligence collection, collation and dissemination relative to missing civilian and military personnel held by Communist countries. Tentative proposals call for a 60-day study of the problem by representatives of the military services, DOD, State, CIA and the FBI to develop and assign specific responsibilities in this particular problem area.

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W. E. DITTEL  
Deputy Assistant to  
the Secretary of Defense  
(Special Operations)

CC: asst SecDef (D SA)  
1A 74706

Prepared by:  
BJSmith/JKalleher/J1  
1 Nov 55 OSO OSD  
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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Washington

18 August 1955

Dear Mr. Dulles:

During the war in Korea no planned penetration of prisoner of war camps was achieved by the United States Armed Forces and organized evasion-escape operations failed to materialize.

The Central Intelligence Agency has specific responsibilities for certain operations in support of the recovery of prisoners of war, while others are the responsibility of the Military Departments. The Defense Advisory Committee on Prisoners of War has suggested that further action is required to ensure that the responsibilities of the various agencies concerned are clearly defined and commensurate with their capabilities.

An early conference is requested to resolve these issues in order that the Military Departments may proceed in the development of joint war plans. The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Special Operations) is designated as my representative in arranging the necessary coordination.

Sincerely yours,

C. E. WILSON

Mr. Allen Dulles  
Director, Central  
Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D. C.

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ATCH 15

file w/  
11 Clair Powells  
PSS

# MESSAGE

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NR: PD 196

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U. S. Officials Only.

From: Indochina, Saigon.

Date of info: 8-18 November 1954.

Appraisal of content: 23

Source: Vietnamese Government prison official with access  
information from Poulo Condore (E)

Subject: Result of International Control Commission  
Investigation of conditions at Poulo Condore Prison.

ACTION -  
INFO - X  
HAS  
COPY - ✓

1. From 8-18 November an International Control Commission team investigated prison conditions at Poulo Condore as a result of a Viet Minh (VM) complaint. The team was composed of Indian Major Sandhu, Canadian Major Taylor, and Polish Major Manills who was accompanied by an unidentified Polish interpreter. Captain Do Quang Tru, who is also known as Hoang Nhu, represented the VM as an observer. Tru was accompanied by Ten Duc Chinh who acted as interpreter. Major De Montmarier observed for the French. South Vietnam procurer (Attorney) General Nguyen Van Duy and Cao Van Ba, representing the office of South Vietnam delegate Tran Van Lam were Vietnamese Government observers. (Field comment. Cao Van Ba was reported on 2 August 1954 as Director of Information for South Vietnam).

2. Investigators found that VM allegations of continued detention of VM prisoners is true. All members and observers, except Taylor, expressed the opinion that prison director Major Blanck should be disciplined. Taylor remained noncommittal. Team found that prisoners were underfed, badly clothed and housed, and uncared for medically. Team also found evidence that prisoners were brutally tortured, both physically and mentally.

3. The team will recommend the immediate release of 160 VM and 62 Vietnamese Nationalist political prisoners who are still on the island. The team was not concerned with criminal offenders who are detained there.

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**SECRET****MESSAGE****DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
STAFF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE**

NR: PD 196

PAGE 2

4. The VM observer, Do Quang Tru, was formerly imprisoned at Poulo Condore. He intends to make a world-wide press story of the investigation results, using this as evidence of French violation of the Indochina Truce (that VM prisoners are still being detained), and as illustration of inhuman treatment which the French accorded the Vietnamese. Sandhu and Manills agreed that Tru should do so.

Field distr: State (FVS-312)

Formal dissem follows in CS-51913.

ACTION: R2

INFO : G3, JCS, GSO, AF, NAVY, PENTAR

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(1 Dec 54)

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CS FORM  
1 AUG 51

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REPLACES GCS FORM  
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MAY BE USED.**SECRET**

62A1310 #4  
Prisoners of War  
SD-B-

Approved For Release 2002/07/03 : CIA-RDP85B00066R000400070013-0

DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PRISONERS OF WAR

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COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

7 July 1955

COPY

SUBJECT: Adequacy of Plans to Recover Captured Personnel in Event of Future War

DISCUSSION

Evasion and escape programs were carried out in World War II. In the Korean War, no planned penetration of prisoners of war camps was achieved by the U.S. Armed Forces, and organized evasion-escape operations failed to materialize. In only one instance was any attempt (such as air drops of leaflets or foodstuffs or wing signals) made to reassure our prisoners of war that they were not forgotten. Aircraft recovery of pilots was moderately successful. Present war planning includes adequate evasion and escape training concepts along with plans for organized efforts to recover captured personnel in the event of war. Current planning embraces consideration of the following general courses of action to be followed: (a) winning from war; (b) individual evasion and escape efforts given limited support from normal military operating forces; (c) leaflet and ration drops and similar means of communication; (d) campaigns within which prisoners of war can be freed, and (e) clandestine operations designed to assist prisoner escapes.

Joint coordination exists for recovery plans and efforts. By virtue of its mission, the Air Force has special plans pertaining to deep-in reconnaissance, reinforcement and rescue. Central Intelligence Agency possesses limited capability for supporting the organized recovery of prisoners. There is question as to whether present Central Intelligence Agency responsibilities are compatible with its capabilities. There are controversial points in respect to organization, command relations and coordination for joint action in evasion and escape. Whether or not such operations should be within the category of unconventional warfare is an unresolved question.

RECOMMENDATION

That you (Secretary of Defense) sign the attached memorandum to the Military Departments directing that they develop plans for overt communications with prisoners of war via air drops or pre-arranged air-to-ground code, establish a more effective system of infiltrating selected and specially trained personnel into enemy areas to render prisoners of war assistance and develop and provide military personnel with miniaturized weapons, communications and devices to aid prisoners of war.

That you (Secretary of Defense) sign the attached letter to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency requesting that a joint study be made of the respective responsibilities and capabilities of Central Intelligence Agency and the Military Departments for recovery of prisoners of war in future conflicts.

REFERENCE

Study Group Documents - CPW/3 D-14, CPW/3 D-16, CPW/3 D-9a, CPW/ D-29.

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